Financial assistance to Madhya Pradesh for preparation of master plan for Places of Tourist Importance

3331. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have agreed to provide financial assistance to Madhya Pradesh for preparing a master plan for integrated development of places of tourists importance,

(b) if so, the details of the schemes, estimated cost and contribution by the Centre;

(c) whether a similar aid is expected to be given to Andhra Pradesh; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Government of Madhya Pradesh has not sent any proposal for the preparation of a master plan for integrated development of places of tourist importance to the Department of Tourism, Government of India.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No such proposal from the Government of Andhra Pradesh is pending with th J Department of Tourism, Government of India.

(d) Does not arise.

Declaration of Mahabodhi Temple, Bodh Gaya as World Heritage site by UNESCO

3332. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have approached the UNESCO to declare the Mahabodhi temple at Bodh Gaya as world heritage sites;

(b) if so, what is their reaction; and

(c) by when, it is likely to be given the status of world heritage site?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Department of Tourism, Government of India has submitted the nomination for inscription of Mahabodhi Temple Complex (Bihar) on the World Heritage List. However, the proposal has

been deferred by the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee, as the proposal was incomplete.

Attracting foreign tourists to visit Rajasthan, Goa and Kerala

3333. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any plan to attract more foreign tourists to our country particularly for visiting States like Rajasthan, Goa and Kerala;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government is aware that the number of local tourists has gone down to 10 per cent of the normal traffic in these months and if so, what remedial measures Government is planning to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In order to attract more foreign tourists to India the Government has taken the following steps:

- Promotion of ethnic traffic like PIOs, NRIs specially from USA, Canada, South Africa and Mauritius.
- Promotion of tourist charters.
- Organising Fam tours for Travel Agents/Tour Operators/TV Teams/ Travel Writers/Decision and Opinion Makers for projecting India's positive image.
- Use of information technology for promotion of tourism; Website, Kiosks, CD's Rom Etc.
- Promotion of cultural, heritage, health and religious tourism.
- Participation in tourism exhibitions like WTM, ITB, E1BTM, BIT, FITURetc.
- Promotion of incentive, conference and convention tourism.
- Holding of PATA 2002 in India.

(c) There was an estimated growth of 10% in the local tourists in the year 2000 over 1999.